

2017 AUG 10 AM 7:24

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Key findings from the report are below and factor into the position by HHS to oppose Bill 22. Their recommendations as proposed in the CD 2 are disingenuous and do little to save lives or save the tax payers money.

P. 5

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HHS has consistently indicated that "more research" is needed before passing a bill to increase the spay/neuter of feral cats. They have done the research. They know the numbers. They know the outcomes. No additional research is necessary.

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Sadly – the consultant recommends that feral cats being taking in by the HHS WILL BE euthanized. Period. Therefore, the ONLY option is to address the outcomes of ferals cats PRIOR to euthanasia. This recommendation – albeit a sad statement of the lack of innovation by HHS – will save the City in animal control costs because the goal is to reduce intake....which means less cost for intake, sheltering, euthanasia and disposal – a cost borne by the taxpayer.

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This recommendation supports passage of Bill 22 CD 1. By creating a feral cat certificate and making it an affordable and accessible option to the public, the number of cats sterilized WILL increase.

"The solution must focus not only on increasing the volume of spay / neuter surgeries but also on reaching individual cats and colonies that are currently not served."

Unlike 2012 when this report was released, the broader animal welfare community has expanded outreach to focus on Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) as a humane, compassionate and viable option to Trap-Kill. Many entities are located in rural and at risk communities – not urban Honolulu like the HHS. This opportunity has been successfully in place for the past 4 years.

~~Speaker Registration~~/Testimony

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Name	Alicia Maluafiti
Phone	8082243648
Email	alicia@poidogsandpopoki.org
Meeting Date	08-09-2017
Council/PH Committee	Council
Agenda Item	Bill 22 CD1
Your position on the matter	Support
Representing	Organization
Organization	Poi Dogs & Popok
Do you wish to speak at the hearing?	Yes
Written Testimony	
Testimony Attachment	20170808221213_City_Council_testimony_on_Bill_22_CD_1.pdf
Accept Terms and Agreement	1



improving the quality of lives of pets and their people.

HAWAIIAN HUMANE SOCIETY (HHS) FINANCIAL CONFLICT OVER BILL 22 ANIMAL CONTROL TRUMPS ANIMAL WELFARE SUPPORT BILL 22 CD1

Since January, Poi Dogs & Popoki has worked with City Council to draft and introduce a bill to expand the Neuter Now program by offering subsidized spay/neuter rates to people and animals that need the most help. Medicaid and low-income housing recipients would pay just \$20 to spay or neuter their cat or dog. For anyone interested in spaying and neutering feral cats around their neighborhoods, businesses, or even in their backyards, they would pay only \$10. The goal of the bill is to save lives by reducing pet overpopulation and the out-of-control euthanasia of animals by Oahu's animal control contractor – the Hawaiian Humane Society (HHS).

The fight over passage of the bill has become about Animal Control versus Animal Welfare. HHS has opposed the bill from Day 1 and offered up numerous unfounded reasons for why the proposal won't work. **For 30 years, they managed the Neuter Now program and in that time, they never made a single recommendation to the City to improve the program** – except to increase the reimbursement to the veterinary clinics. Bill 22 does NOT “rush something into law without knowing its impact.” After taking over the Neuter Now contract in 2015 and after only one year, Poi Dogs & Popoki (PDP) made 6 recommendations to the City about how to reduce administrative costs, how to spay and neuter more animals, how to more responsibly and strategically target the people and animals that need the most help, and how all these recommendations not only save the City money, but better utilize the Neuter Now budget in which only \$350,000 of the \$600,000 appropriated is being used. **BILL 22 SAVES LIVES AND SAVES THE CITY MONEY!**

Since the goal of Bill 22 is to reduce pet overpopulation, the euthanasia of healthy animals, and the resulting cost savings to Oahu tax payers, it is in direct conflict with the Hawaiian Humane Society's fiscal goals which includes managing the Animal Control Contract for \$4.1 million – almost half of their entire operations budget. With the growth of more affordable spay/neuter choices across the island, in the last 4 years, HHS has taken in 6,000 fewer animals under their animal control contract. It therefore stands to reason that instead of increasing their contract \$1 million over the next 5 years that the contract would decrease – especially if Bill 22 passes and pet overpopulation continues to decrease. For HHS – it's clear that they are more concerned with Animal Control than Animal Welfare.

As the bill heads to the last reading before City Council on August 9, the HHS has proposed a new draft (a floor draft) to effectively preserve the status quo and ensure that their animal control contract remains intact even if that means euthanasia remains an integral part of the animal control plan. They propose eliminating the reduced-fee certificate for Medicaid and low income

housing pet owner and establishing only a 6-month pilot program for feral cats using a \$20 certificate instead of PDP's proposed \$10 certificate.

The HHS also recommends doing a "study" before doing anything "permanent" that might reduce euthanasia. In the past 5 years, they have spent over \$200,000 doing "studies". And they all say the same thing: that they are euthanizing too many animals! The key to reducing euthanasia is reducing pet overpopulation. And the pet owners and animals contributing most to pet overpopulation are our low-income families that cannot afford to spay and neuter their pets AND feral cats. These are the facts from THEIR OWN STUDY! Bill 22 addresses these issues! And now – **HHS wants to fool the public into thinking that "there are too many layers" and "too many implications" so they (HHS) should manage a "pilot program first."**

Across the country, county and state governments provide spay/neuter voucher programs similar to Neuter Now – all with the goal of reducing pet overpopulation. They were NOT implemented to "strengthen the bond between the veterinary community and pet owners" which the HHS highlights in their testimony. The biggest difference between these other successful programs and Honolulu's is that the government subsidy targets low income families and feral cats because that is where they get the biggest bang for their buck. **If the City wants to reduce animal control costs and reduce euthanasia, the underutilized funds of the Neuter Now program should be used to help the people and animals that need the most help. Bill 22 CD 1 will do that!**

Please support **Bill 22 CD 1** which would IMMEDIATELY begin to save lives! The HHS and their proposal costs taxpayers more money, delays implementation, and will result in more animals dying. It was drafted ONLY to preserve the status quo and the proposed \$5 million animal control budget awarded to the Hawaiian Humane Society – a contract that rewards killing animals, not saving lives.

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1. Everyone would like to see a decrease in the population of community cats
2. Stakeholders agree that current efforts are not having the needed impact
3. All agree that a neutral resource to coordinate efforts is crucial to success

In the past 5 years, the nonprofit community has stepped up to address the high euthanasia rate at the Hawaiian Humane Society. Because of the lack of trust in a bureaucratic institution that focuses on animal control – not animal welfare – the consultant appropriately recommends that HHS NOT be the lead on any effort. However, the CD 2 version of Bill 22 as well as the entire Neuter Now, Animal Control, and Feral Chicken contracts which are sole sourced to HHS attempts to identify HHS as the lead for their proposed pilot program.

P. 14

Regarding Neuter Now:

“I think there is an opportunity to approach the City with a plan to carve out a piece of the total Neuter Now funding and have it redirected. If the City allows a portion of the budgeted funds to be redirected to other programs rather than used exclusively for pass-through surgery vouchers, it could cover a significant amount of the projected budget for the community cat initiative.

“.....it gives you one more argument to support the idea of direct funding for an HHS initiative.”

It’s evident – based on the recommendations by this report and verified by HHS staff – that the HHS does NOT support Bill 22 as written because they had other plans for the Neuter Now funding. Specifically – HHS is planning to open their own \$800,000+ high volume spay/neuter clinic at their Moiliili shelter. Their recommendation of a pilot program would enable them to “manage” funding for a feral cat spay/neuter program with little or no oversight by the City (similar to their management of the \$4.1 million animal control contract). Their proposal to “collect and report” findings will serve only one goal: their own.

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